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LETTER DATED 4 OCTOBER 1993 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SOMALIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On behalf of all peace-advocating Somalis, I wish to join you in expressing my sorrow at those brutal incidents that claimed the lives of United Nations peace-keepers, the latest of which resulted in the death of 12 American peace-keepers as well as 1 Malaysian peace-keeper and the injuries of dozens of peace-keepers on 3 October 1993. I wish to assure you, and the world, of our deepest regrets at this tragedy. Our condolences go to their families and friends and to the peoples and Governments of the United States of America and Malaysia.

Despite the obligation to start my letter with reference to those disturbing and unfortunate incidents in my country, I must not pass without extending my gratitude to you and the members of the Security Council for unanimously adopting your resolution 865 (1993). In this spirit, I wish to share with you and the members of the Council the contents of the attached few pages.

I should therefore be very grateful if this letter and its attachment could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Fatun M. HASSAN
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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* Reissued for technical reasons.

Annex

The challenges of the current reality in Somalia for the international community

Having expressed my deep sorrow at the death and injuries of the international peace-keepers, I also wish to express sorrow at the death of the hundreds of Somalis in Mogadishu during the latest as well as the previous senseless fights with the international forces, and I wish that those tragedies could have been avoided. I deplore those premeditated incidents of violence which exposed the lives of innocent civilians (including women and children) to such dangerous and fatal circumstances in pursuit of self-imposed ends. I appeal to the hearts and minds of my countrymen and women in the south of Mogadishu to maintain order and let reason prevail. I also plead with the leadership of the Somali National Alliance (SNA)/United Somali Congress (USC) to revert to their better senses and resort to civilized ways for resolving national problems and expressing their grievances. After all, the SNA/USC has been a party to the Addis Ababa agreements of 27 March 1993, which endorsed, and indeed coincided with, the approval of the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) by the Security Council.

I must remind the world of the fact that the international community has a responsibility towards attaining peace and stability in present-day lawless Somalia. UNOSOM II is acting in accordance with its approved mandate under this international responsibility. We are indeed very grateful that Somalia has become relatively more peaceful and more stable, except in that part of Mogadishu which has, of late, remained the trouble spot and a stumbling-block in an otherwise improving situation with international support and assistance. Any withdrawal of the international forces or change in their mandate and rules of engagement will be detrimental to peace in the whole country and will bring the situation back to where it started.

The world must not forget the following facts. There are a minimum of 12 other factions that are signatories to the Addis Ababa agreements of 8 January and 27 March, that are supportive of the United Nations efforts (including disarming) and that are patiently waiting but closely observing the results of the SNA/USC antagonism. The fact that all the other factions are not directly involved in the prevailing situation does not mean that they will always remain satisfied with the course of events. It may, and can happen, God forbid, that there will be future clashes of interest of other factions with the position of the United Nations.

General Aideed and his immediate followers come from outside Mogadishu, the central regions, 500 kilometres away. In a country that has socially, politically and geographically disintegrated into its component clans, his influence in the area is equated with that of an occupation force, by some. This constitutes one of the main reasons for the feud between his faction and the other in the north of Mogadishu. Under normal circumstances, SNA/USC's influence in the area would not have been a problem, but given the prevailing mentality of intense clan-consciousness in today's Somalia, the fact that General Aideed and his followers come from outside Mogadishu will definitely invite a new wave of inter-clan fighting if the United Nations fails to enforce

the Addis Ababa agreements. This gives all the more reason for re-enforcing the current course of action to disarm all of the Somali factions instead of pulling out some of the troops. The factions have inherited, and share between them, a sizeable amount of the military equipment of the Somali armed forces, considered at one point the best equipped in Africa.

If the current discourse on the Somali question leads to a premature withdrawal of troops or a softening of the international will and zest to enforce the Addis Ababa agreements, it will have consequences for peace in Somalia; it will undermine the credibility of the United Nations to enforce peace and security throughout the world in a most turbulent era of its existence; and it will fail the positive hopes and aspirations internationally linked to a better new world order. Therefore, if the adversaries or the sceptics of the United Nations Operation in Somalia are truly concerned about the affliction of international peace-keepers or the Somalis themselves - if at all - I forewarn them of the consequences of their tenet which will inevitably claim the lives of an infinite number of Somalis and will result in incalculable losses in material and moral terms as well as irreversible costs to regional peace and stability.

Ideally, there should be no reason for the international community to negotiate unilaterally with the SNA/USC. Instead, the faction has to concentrate on sorting out its differences with other Somali factions - if at all - which has been the point of the international mediation efforts towards reconciliation. I would therefore encourage the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to explore the possibility of holding an immediate consultative Somali national conference involving all factions, ensuring the participation of legitimate SNA/USC negotiators, to discuss the present situation. I would, however, warn against the international community contemplating the formation of a government, as a quick-fix and as an easy way out of the current isolated crisis in the south of Mogadishu, at this stage, which can be counter-productive given the prevailing political psychology.

In any case, the formation of a national representative government is premature given the reality in south Mogadishu and the claimed secession of the north by the Somali National Movement (SNM), in addition to the fact that there are outstanding territorial kinship-right claims to many population centres considered to be regional capitals. All these, and many more constitutional and political problems, preclude the possibility of an immediately constituted government prior to their solution. Reconciliation should take account of the real issues and problems at district and provincial levels and should therefore be multi-level, not entirely focused on empty political differences between faction leaders. Those efforts directed towards the creation of civil structures at local levels and peacemaking initiatives between clans in major population centres have been steps in the right direction. I firmly believe that UNOSOM should continue with its assistance towards the creation of civil structures at district levels as an avenue towards established regional or provincial authorities which will naturally and eventually lead to a representative national government.

For months, people in Somalia have been anxious to see the benefits of the programme of rehabilitation and reconstruction and remained concerned about the concentration of international efforts and resources in Mogadishu, and

particularly its south. While I do appreciate the reasons for this to date, I believe it is about time that the United Nations and the international non-governmental organizations boost their presence in other parts of the country for re-enforcing peace and revitalizing the civil society so that the world could appreciate the stark contrast of these other parts with south Mogadishu. I must also qualify this assumption by noting the fact that international voluntary contributions towards rehabilitation and reconstruction, in support of UNOSOM, have not been encouraging to date.

Nevertheless, we are grateful for whatever contributions have already been made or pledged. But I wish to remind the world that Somalia has been supported by the international community, even during the previous tyrannical regime. Somalia would still need assistance even if there were a government in place today, and will continue to obtain international assistance long after its reconstruction as a State. This fact is notwithstanding the growing international complacency and impatience with current assistance at a most miserable stage of the country's history. Effectively managed, today's assistance can lead to quicker reconstruction, which might offset or reduce the future burden of the international community. Renewed international commitment to voluntary contributions necessary for rehabilitation and reconstruction seems to be the shortest cut to a solution and the probable way out of future resource implications.

The Somali question sets a new and an important precedent for international peace-keeping. In this regard, the Security Council, and particularly the five permanent members, are primarily accountable. Ironically, Somalia has succeeded in disintegrating itself in search for democracy, justice and freedom within itself. It is true that it has presented a challenging question to the rest of the world; but let us hope that the question does not lead to confusion in the existing world order in the international community's search for solutions to the crisis. Indeed, any turning back from current efforts at this stage can be detrimental to peace in Somalia and can frustrate similar or future international solidarity on peace and stability.

I claim neither the legitimacy nor the moral authority to impose my wishes on the international community as regards what to do or how to approach the Somali question. But I grant myself a moral obligation to submit my humble and true convictions, and fears, putting forward what I consider to be the collective Somali interest first, and to offset any courses of action which might become detrimental to the international goodwill to maintain world peace and stability and pose a predicament to the dependent Somali future. I therefore only hope that the international community will remain consistent in its efforts to maintain peace and stability in Somalia, with its intentions and formal decisions in support of its internationally adopted laws, its declared principles of justice and human rights and the binding Somali agreements.

I therefore plead with the members of the Security Council, all the States Members of the United Nations and all the regional groups and intergovernmental organizations to maintain their support to the current mandate of the United Nations Operation in Somalia to avoid a greater loss and a lasting tragedy.